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**ECUADOR ERUPTS
AT IMF CUTS**
Humiliated government
forced to back down
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Socialist Worker

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XR REBELS DEMAND CLIMATE ACTION



THOUSANDS JOINED an Extinction Rebellion march in London last Saturday. Cops have launched a draconian crackdown on protests

>>Pages 2,3,5 and 10&11

RACISM

Wave of attacks
in 1919 were a
legacy of Empire

ONE HUNDRED years ago blood ran in the streets of Cardiff, Glasgow, Liverpool and London.

Gangs of racists hunted black sailors they accused of taking their jobs.

Ken Olende says this shows why socialists must take the fight against racism into the workers' movement.

>>Pages 14&15

MIDDLE EAST



**Imperialists
betray the
Kurds—again**

THE TURKISH invasion of north eastern Syria last week threatens to unleash a new imperialist war.

Donald Trump's decision to remove US troops from the region gave a green light to Turkey's president Erdogan to attack.

Erdogan is determined to stop the development of an independent Kurdish state.

>>Page 6

EUROPEAN UNION

Brexit talks offer
no solutions

THIS WEEK'S late surge of Brexit negotiations between the European Union and the British government cannot solve the on-going crisis.

Boris Johnson faces either a calamitous "no-deal" which terrifies his big business friends—or cries of "betrayal" from his Brexit Party rivals.

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JOHNSON OUT NOW

FIGHT TO GET RID OF THE TORIES



THE THINGS THEY SAY

'Arenas for political oppression and the enforcement of the ruling code'

The Sun pundit **Leo McKinstry** fears Extinction Rebellion's Citizens' Assemblies

'Quasi-religious death cult'

Right wing opinion-haver **Julia Hartley-Brewer** on Extinction Rebellion

'The Earth needs an extinction—ours'

The Mirror's 'Fleet Street Fox' **Susie Boniface** explains why Extinction Rebellion is wrong

'If you really want to save the Earth, it means getting rid of 66 percent of human beings'

Boniface continues

'There are plenty of candidates for a cull'

Boniface goes on like this...

'The truth is that about two-thirds of those protesters need to not exist'

And on...



Extinction Rebellion takes the climate fight to the bankers

by SARAH BATES

A PROTEST in the heart of London's financial districts by Extinction Rebellion (XR) activists on Monday heralded the start of the second week of action in the capital.

Hundreds of rebels occupied the junction outside Bank underground station—under the shadow of the Bank of England and a host of other financial institutions.

Other activists held “swarming” blockades around main streets in the City.

Liz had travelled to the International Rebellion from the anti-fracking occupation at the Preston New Road site in Lancashire.

She was holding a banner declaring “climate struggle = class struggle” and told Socialist Worker that “we want to disrupt so it's not business as usual”.

Class

“It's absolutely a class issue—it affects poor people the most, and women the most,” she said.

“We want to get people to divest their money—to stop funding wars and everything that creates the climate breakdown.”

The “banking on a breakdown” action was organised to “call time on our broken financial system.”

“The City has repeatedly

been implicated in systematic corruption with not a single individual held accountable, and not a single business model changed,” said an XR statement.

Scores of police confiscated all musical instruments and sound systems, and arrested those seen to be leading chanting or singing.

Paramedics gave cheers and thumbs up, and activists scattered to the side of the road in seconds to let

ambulances pass.

Many activists argued that banks should withdraw their investments in oil and gas firms. Anna had made a banner demanding, “Divest from climate change.”

“There's not so much awareness of how much money is invested in fossil fuels, including in things like pension schemes,” she said.

“I tried to choose a pension scheme that doesn't invest in fossil fuels, but it's

not possible to do it with my employer.” A combination of cops from the Met and City of London police forces combined efforts in an attempt to get activists off the junction. But their pressure just meant more rebels joined the sit-in.

Jade was sat down near a police line when she told Socialist Worker that she was there to “stand up and be counted”.

“I'm going to hold my ground for as long as I can,”

she said. “I understand the police have got a job to do, and many of them share our values—but we've got a job to do too.”

Tackling climate catastrophe will mean challenging the rule of financial institutions, and the rotten system they rely on.

And building a socialist system based on the interests of people and planet, over the interests of profit, will be central to that fight.

EXTINCTION REBELLION protesters in the City of London on Monday

Socialist Worker Appeal to raise £125,000

Telling the truth about XR and the climate rebellion

Socialist Worker is the voice of people fighting for a better world. It dispels the racist scapegoating and anti-working class rhetoric of the mainstream press.

We publish stories of the strikes, protests and pickets that can beat back the bosses and bigots.

We tell the truth and bring socialist politics to the battle to stop catastrophic



climate change. Last month Socialist Worker brought news of the seven million people joining climate strikes.

This month we have been reporting on the Extinction Rebellion actions in London and across the world. We are asking everyone who backs Socialist Worker to donate as much as they can and help fund the resistance.

To donate go to socialistworker.co.uk/appeal

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Good grief! 30,000 join funeral march for planet

THE THREAT of climate catastrophe and ecological breakdown drew tens of thousands of people out onto the streets of London last Saturday for a “grief march”.

Extinction Rebellion (XR) said 30,000 people marched—with the front of the demonstration reaching the end shortly after the last rebels left the starting point.

The march was organised to “share grief for what has been lost already, and for the loss that is to come.”

Yet it was far from a sombre occasion. Many people were drawn onto it because the International Rebellion that began last week has offered an opportunity to change the future. Margaret told Socialist Worker that she was on the streets because, “It seems this is the only way we can get our voices heard—I’ve tried everything else.”

Rebels carried placards, or models or puppets of extinct animals or species threatened with extinction.

Seasoned

The march brought together those who had never been on a political demonstration and seasoned activists.

It was filled with the homemade placards, colourful banners, animal costumes, hula hoops and everything that could normally be expected at a XR action.

Alison said it “felt amazing” to take part in the demonstration. “I can’t believe how many people are here. The smaller direct actions are important but it’s good to come together



THE ‘RED brigade’ led the march

PICTURE: GUY SMALLMAN

as well.”

An urgent need for action ran through the demonstration, with many rebels wielding placards pointing out the emergency of the climate crisis.

A hundreds-strong group of trade unionists who had rallied in Trafalgar Square joined the demonstration.

Addressing the trade union rally, Ben from XR said, “Trade unions

have been instrumental in driving reform—XR needs you.”

Clara Palliard from the PCS union called on activists to “not just lobby and protest, but to take direct action like XR.”

Trade unionists from across industries and unions spoke about how XR and a global climate strike last September had shaped debates about

climate change in their workplaces.

While braving the rain on Oxford Street, Margaret said the size and spirit of the demonstration “gives you hope”.

More online

Read the full report at bit.ly/GriefXR

Actions target the bosses

THE REBELLION included high-profile protests at London City Airport, the BBC, and a fossil fuel bosses’ conference.

Hundreds of people occupied a busy intersection near Liverpool Street station last Thursday, outside a hotel where fossil fuel bosses met for the 6th Government Oil and Gas Fiscal Summit.

Energy companies and lobbyists met to discuss how to get government investment and licences to extract oil and gas.

Some protesters glued themselves to a door of the hotel, while others locked their arms inside a metal oil drum filled with concrete. Many more simply sat in the road, while others danced around a samba band.

Earlier in the day hundreds more protesters staged a sit-in outside the BBC’s headquarters, demanding that it “tell the truth” about climate change.

Two activists climbed on top of a glass awning above the

main entrance, while the rest occupied the space in front of it. The protesters held a “people’s assembly”—breaking into groups to discuss what their demands should be—which they then fed back to the main body.

Protesters occupied London City Airport last Thursday as part of an International Rebellion that began on Monday.

Big crowds were gathered outside while more protesters had glued themselves to the floor inside.

Police carted off people who were peacefully sitting on the ground, in some cases saying that a breach of the peace was going to take place.

Around 60 activists took part in a student assembly in Vauxhall Pleasure Gardens in south London last Friday night.

The assembly discussed action at campuses across Britain, including planning for the next global climate strike on 29 November.

How the police clamped down

THE SHADOW of the Metropolitan Police has constantly hung over the rebellion.

Cops have confiscated equipment and arrested those driving vans full of kit.

Hundreds of rebels rallied outside New Scotland Yard last Sunday to demand the police return accessibility equipment needed by rebels with disabilities.

Facing increased police presence, intimidation and arrests activists were not able to hold all of the twelve sites they had targeted.

On Monday—the eighth day of the International Rebellion—the Met launched a final offensive on the Trafalgar Square.

Cops announced a change to the “Section 14” restrictions covering the occupation and started to immediately evict activists.

It followed a major offensive three days into the rebellion that saw waves of cops moved in on occupations in Westminster.

Emily told Socialist Worker, “It’s been a fight, but it’s one worth having—everyone is talking about it. Police can remove us but they



A cop in a strop

PICTURE: SOCIALIST WORKER

can’t get rid of us.

“The climate emergency won’t just disappear, so neither will we.”

One occupation at a park in Vauxhall, south London remained as Socialist Worker went to press.

Extinction Rebellion should be commended for defying the police—and the state they are part of—to fight for radical change.

Protests around the world for the planet

FROM GERMANY to India, the US to New Zealand, people from around the world took action in unity to demand climate justice.

Extinction Rebellion says that protests, occupations and action took place in around 60 countries.

As of Sunday evening, some 1,463 people had been arrested in action outside Britain.

In Brussels, cops turned a water cannon on people staging a sit-in, and arrested 313. Over 160



On an XR protest in India

rebels were arrested in Amsterdam as part of their action last Saturday, where people erected hammocks suspended from canal bridges.

In New York, rebels glued on to a green boat and blocked the streets around Times Square, and 62 people were arrested.

There was a 58-hour occupation of the Big Star roundabout in Berlin. It was followed by a blockade of the Marschallbrücke bridge, where activists locked onto a giant wooden life raft.

In Argentina, the focus was on activists who died fighting climate catastrophe. Hundreds rallied in Buenos Aires on the “Murdered Earth defenders’ solidarity action.”

In Wellington, New Zealand there was a blockade outside the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment, with “climate crime scene” tape around the protest.

A funeral procession was held in Goa, southern India, paying respect to the Aarey forest in Mumbai, which is threatened with heavy deforestation.



Pressure to reach Brexit deal adds to huge crisis for Johnson

by TOMÁŠ TENGYEL-EVANS

BORIS JOHNSON this week faces one of the biggest crises of his government.

On Saturday a highly unusual weekend session of parliament is set to debate the latest Brexit position. Johnson plans to meet European Union (EU) rulers just days earlier.

Tory and EU negotiators were involved in “crunch talks” before the two-day summit began. They have to come up with a new withdrawal agreement if Britain is to leave the EU with a deal on 31 October.

Johnson has said he would rather be “dead in a ditch” than not leave the EU on 31 October—with or without a deal.

But the “Benn Act” mandates the government to ask for an extension if there isn’t a deal.

And big business—whose interests the Tories are supposed to represent—wants to remain inside the neoliberal EU or leave the present structures hardly changed.

But if Johnson buckles to EU pressure, he risks being swallowed up by Nigel Farage’s right wing Brexit Party.

Customs

One of the biggest sticking points between Britain and the EU remains the border between Ireland and Northern Ireland.

The dispute revolves around how to avoid a “hard border”—with physical barriers and border checks—after Brexit.

Theresa May’s Brexit deal involved Britain staying in the EU’s single market and customs union for a two-year transition period after Brexit.

This would have supposedly provided time to negotiate a new trade agreement. But the deal introduced a

BACK STORY

Time is running out for the EU and Britain to agree a Brexit deal

● Boris Johnson was set to meet EU officials this week ahead of a special parliament session

● What Brexit would mean for the border between Northern Ireland and Ireland is unresolved

● If no deal is agreed, the “Benn Act” mandates the government to ask for an extension to Brexit

● But Johnson doesn’t want to do that—and if he is seen to buckle, the Brexit Party could benefit

“backstop” to avoid a hard border if a trade deal wasn’t signed by the end of the transition.

A coalition of right wing Tory backbenchers and the loyalist Democratic Unionist Party (DUP) scuppered the plan. They said it would separate the British state from its imperial possessions in Northern Ireland.

Johnson and Irish Taoiseach (prime minister) Leo Varadkar last Sunday said there was now a “pathway” to a deal.

One possible alternative would see Britain enforce EU customs rules on goods moving between Britain and Northern Ireland. And the DUP and the republican Sinn Féin would have a veto over extending any arrangements.

Tory cabinet member Jacob Rees-Mogg, who branded a similar proposal by May “cretinous”, said he might have to “eat my words”.

But the EU chief negotiator, French conservative politician Michel Barnier, poured cold water over the plans. He said the proposals were an “untested” arrangement, meaning a deal couldn’t be hammered out by 31 October.

Any version of Brexit that is based on Tory policies will be bad for working class people. And the EU—with its own regime of free markets and racist borders—offers no alternative.

Labour and the union leaders should seize on Johnson’s crisis to drive the Tories out.



BORIS JOHNSON met with Ireland’s leader **Leo Varadkar** last week to discuss a Brexit deal

Queen’s speech is a preview of a repressive Tory election manifesto

THE QUEEN’S speech on Monday won’t lead to many, if any, new laws.

Johnson lost his working majority last month when 21 MPs were booted out of the Tory party for supporting parliamentary efforts to stop a no-deal Brexit.

The queen’s speech could even be voted down for the first time in 95 years. But it gave a preview of what the Tory manifesto for a general election will look like.

At its centre were repressive “law and order” measures designed to direct anger away from the Tories and towards an “enemy within”.

Harsher

The Tories want harsher sentences for many crimes and the removal of the possibility of release on licence halfway through a sentence for some prisoners.

Community sentences would be made harsher and there would be more extradition powers to replace the European Arrest Warrant. Maximum



The Tories want to make jails worse

sentences for foreign nationals who breach a deportation order would be “drastically increased”.

Frances Crook, chief executive from the Howard League for Penal Reform, said the sentencing changes were “the politics of the lynch mob”.

“We already know that prisoners are in appalling conditions, with a lot of violence, injury and suicides,” she said.

Crook later tweeted, “Desperate and weak governments always try to curry favour by stirring up hate, increasing punishment is a race to the bottom of politics.”

Points

The queen’s speech featured calls for further attacks on migrants, with a points-based system that will seek to limit poorer people coming to Britain.

None of this will reduce crime, which is fuelled by austerity policies and alienation from society. But it is further evidence that Johnson wants an election dominated by reactionary arguments.

Realising that rail privatisation is a powerful target for Labour, the Tories said they want to reform the present franchising system.

But they aren’t taking back rail from the privatisers.

RMT union general secretary Mick Cash said, “Train companies will always suck the life blood out of the system in profits and dividends.”

Second vote would split opposition to the Tories

HUNDREDS of thousands of people were expected to join a “People’s Vote” march in central London on Saturday.

The march is calling for a second referendum on Britain’s membership of the European Union (EU).

It will likely attract many people who hate the Tories, oppose a trade deal with Donald Trump, and want to defend migrants.

But the leadership of the People’s Vote campaign is dominated by right wing liberals who offer no solution to problems facing ordinary people.

They include Remain-supporting Tories who have backed austerity and racism.

And some Remain politicians have said they would restrict freedom of movement for migrants.

The People’s Vote campaign acts as a



Right wing **Alastair Campbell** (right) opposes Brexit

front for corporate interests.

The real division shouldn’t be between Leave and Remain voters. It should be between those who want more attacks on workers, the poor and migrants—and those who want to fight austerity and racism.

A second referendum would reinforce Brexit as the main line of division in every workplace, campus and neighbourhood.

This would make it harder to mount a united fightback against Johnson, the Tories and their rotten policies.

The best response is to unite Remain and Leave supporting working class people in a fight to kick out the Tories, and to advance class issues.

A left wing and anti-racist version of Brexit would say yes to freedom of movement and no to the single market.

Voter ID plan hits vulnerable

THE QUEEN’S speech said “the union is of the utmost importance to the government”.

But 50 percent of people in Scotland want independence, according to a recent poll.

Scottish National Party leader Nicola Sturgeon said last weekend that she will request a new independence referendum before the end of the year.

But both the Tories and Labour have said they are against such a move.

The government claimed in the queen’s speech that there will be measures to



Not everyone has a passport to use for ID

improve air and water quality.

They are under pressure over environmental issues.

But they will do nothing meaningful to interfere with firms’ profit-making.

There is one measure that Boris Johnson would like to

rush through before an election—making it harder for people to vote.

The queen’s speech said there would be measures to “protect the integrity of democracy”.

This could mean compulsory photo ID—such as passports or driving licences—for voters.

It would hit groups such as migrants, homeless people, young and older voters hardest.

A trial voter ID scheme at ten authorities in the English local elections in May saw 2,803 people turned away.

School uniform support cut

SUPPORT for families to help with the cost of school uniforms has fallen by more than 70 percent across England since 2010.

More than 80 percent of local councils now offer no assistance, blaming years of cuts.

Data collected through the Freedom of Information Act showed that the “school uniform grant” has been dramatically scaled back.

The Department for Education still advertises the grant, but councils have to

fund it. Just 27 out of 149 councils surveyed provide the grant.

A third of those only do so in cases such as fires, floods or “extreme poverty”.

Only three councils offer a grant to poorer children in all school years and situations.

Socialist Worker
WHAT WE THINK

CELEBRATE CLIMATE MOVEMENT AND JOIN IT

THE International Rebellion has brought together tens of thousands of people across the globe to demand climate justice.

It’s brought extraordinary scenes of resistance over the most critical of issues.

Organised by direct action group Extinction Rebellion (XR), the programme of resistance has once again brought the climate catastrophe to the fore.

The occupations, demonstrations and creative stunts are a powerful mechanism for turning fear and a sense of powerlessness into action.

It means that all those terrified and angry at the unfolding climate emergency can struggle alongside like-minded people.

In doing so XR, school strikers, anti-fracking campaigners and all other strands of the climate justice movement are changing the terrain for fighting back against ecological catastrophe.

It is hugely cheering to see ordinary people take to the streets and occupy space to say “another world is possible”.

The rebellion will have echoes among people who never

considered themselves political activists, or had not joined a protest before.

That around 30,000 people shut down Oxford Street—on a demonstration with minimal notice or advertising—shows the widespread support for XR.

During the first International Rebellion in April, cops didn’t prevent activists from setting up their occupations in London.

But this time cops did try to stop the occupations assembling—and removed all 12 sites from central London by the eighth day. XR claims heavy handed tactics mean its “strategy is working”. Like any social movement or political struggle,

“**Applaud XR’s resilience and intention to shut down Westminster**”

debates rage in XR about strategy and tactics.

These arguments can be particularly sharp when the police are trying to throw protesters off the streets.

That October’s action was contained, repelled and ultimately shut down by the cops shows there is still some way to go.

The Met would have found it harder to oust rebels from Westminster if the occupations had been much larger than several thousand.

Some in XR see it critical to win the police to the case for a fight against climate emergency.

But the cops are committed to protecting capitalism and “business as usual”. They will stifle the right of ordinary people to organise in order to protect the status quo.

All those fighting for a better world should applaud XR’s resilience, confidence and intention to shut down Westminster.

This should be accompanied by working with rebels to build for 29 November—where workers should fight for workplace action alongside a planned global school climate strike.

STAND WITH CATALONIA

MASSIVE PROTESTS erupted across Catalonia this week after a Spanish court sentenced nine pro-independence Catalan leaders to vicious prison terms.

Oriol Junqueras, former deputy leader of the region’s government, was sentenced to 13 years in prison for sedition and misuse of public funds.

Six other former Catalan officials were sentenced to between ten and 12 years. Two Catalan politicians who headed

pro-independence organisations were sentenced to nine years each. The Spanish authorities immediately renewed their demand for the arrest of Carles Puigdemont, the former head of the Catalan government, who has fled to Belgium.

Their supposed crime was to have held an independence referendum in October 2017 in defiance of the Spanish state.

The true crime was the repression unleashed by Spain against the referendum that left

over 1,000 people injured.

Disgracefully, a spokesperson for the EU’s European Commission said, “This is, and remains, an internal matter for Spain.”

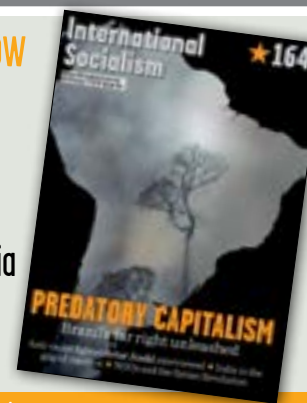
Pedro Sanchez, Spanish prime minister and the leader of the Labour-type PSOE party, backed the court and said, “Today’s decision confirms the defeat of a movement.”

All these political prisoners should be released now. Mass protests and strikes are the only way to win that demand.

The latest issue of International Socialism journal is out now

PREDATORY CAPITALISM

● Eduardo Albuquerque and Cláudia Feres Faria on Bolsonaro’s Brazil
● Anti-racist fighter Avtar Singh Jouhl interviewed ● Raju Das on India in the grip of reaction ● **Plus** John Newsinger on Boris Johnson



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Nigel Farage

ANALYSIS

ALEX CALLINICOS



Imperialists betray the Kurds—again

THE KURDISH-LED Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) have denounced Donald Trump's decision to pull back American troops blocking a Turkish invasion of northern Syria as a "betrayal". Of course they're right.

The SDF were US's main ally on the ground in the campaign to defeat Isis in Syria. Trump's defence that the Kurds "didn't help us in the Second World War, they didn't help us with Normandy" is way beyond ridiculous.

How could a stateless people ruled by four different states and living three thousand kilometres from Normandy have sent a contingent to the D-Day landings?

Foreign Policy magazine interviewed a number of retired and serving US officers who operated with the SDF. "They were devastated by the news that the United States is standing aside to let the Turks massacre the Kurdish troops, and more than one expressed a deep sense of shame," it said.

One officer said, "There will be a whole generation of US military that will never forget this betrayal nor stop apologising for it."

The main task of socialists and anti-imperialists is to oppose the Turkish invasion, express their solidarity with the Kurdish people, and defend their right to national self-determination. But we also need to learn from what has happened.

It isn't the first time that the US has betrayed the Kurds.

The historian Greg Grandin quoted on Facebook from his excellent book on Henry Kissinger, secretary of state to presidents Richard Nixon and Gerald Ford.

Grandin wrote that in the early 1970s, Kissinger had schemed with the Shah of Iran to destabilise Baathist Iraq by supporting the Kurds. Israel provided them with weapons supplied by so as not to alert the State Department to wage an insurgent war for independence in northern Iraq.

He wrote, "In December 1975, believing he had worked out a lasting pro-American balance of power between Iran and Iraq, Kissinger withdrew US support from the Kurds. Baghdad moved quickly, launching an assault on the Kurds that killed thousands and implementing a programme of ethnic cleansing. Arabs were moved into the region and hundreds of thousands of Kurds were rounded up and forcibly relocated."

Impressive

The Kurdish nationalists of northern Iraq nevertheless ended up as American clients. The Kurdish Democratic Union and its military wing, the People's Protection Units (YPG), at the heart of the SDF are a much more impressive movement.

The US officers interviewed by Foreign Policy are full of praise for their political administration of the areas they have liberated. The YPG are allied with the Kurdish Workers Party (PKK) that has waged a long armed struggle in the Kurdish areas of Turkey. It is this connection that has brought down on them the wrath of the Turkish president Recep Tayyip Erdogan. He and his allies in the Turkish military fear that if Kurdish self-governing areas were consolidated across the border in northern Syria the PKK would be stronger.

The SDF have operated in a military and political space created by more powerful forces. On the one hand, the murderous regime of Bashir al-Assad abandoned the Kurdish areas in Syria to concentrate on fighting the revolutionary militias and to divide its opponents.

On the other hand the US, first under Barack Obama and then under Trump, found the SDF useful allies against Isis.

Now, predictably, the US has betrayed them. One should avoid the temptation to focus too much on Trump here. Obama would probably have done the same.

The strategic intelligence website Stratfor explained the brutal logic behind this decision. "When push comes to shove, the White House has chosen to bolster a critical partnership with a strategic ally over defending a loyal, but relatively small, local partner," it said. "While the Turks see the border region as an issue of critical national importance worthy of taking significant risks over, the United States had already been seeking to leave Syria and appears unwilling to risk a blow-up with Turkey over the issue."

The space the SDF were able to operate in is closing. To stem the Turkish onslaught, they have now made a deal with the Assad regime.

It's tragic that the mistake of relying on alliances with imperialist powers should cost so much suffering.

LABOUR LEADER Jeremy Corbyn speaking to party activists in London on Monday

PICTURE: JEREMY CORBYN/TWITTER

Labour MPs use Brexit to stop a Corbyn government

by NICK CLARK

RIGHT WING Labour MPs are doing their best to keep Boris Johnson on as prime minister.

They ganged up at a meeting in parliament on Monday evening to insist that there shouldn't be a snap election.

Labour chair Ian Lavery told the meeting of MPs that the party has "never been more ready" for a general election. In response right wing MPs said Labour can't support an election until there has been a second Brexit referendum.

One told the Politics Home website that MPs were united "in one clear unambiguous position—we cannot have an election".

The right wing MPs want to stop left wing Labour leader Jeremy Corbyn becoming prime minister. They are campaigning to make Labour support having a second referendum before a general election.

Blocked

Labour has already agreed that there shouldn't be an election until parliament has blocked the prospect of a no-deal Brexit.

Speaking to a rally of Labour activists in central London on Monday night, left wing shadow chancellor John McDonnell said, "Yes we want a general election,

but we will make sure before it happens that No Deal is off the agenda."

McDonnell provoked outrage among Labour activists after giving a conciliatory interview to Tony Blair's lie-maker Alastair Campbell in the sexist men's magazine GQ last weekend.

The interview prompted claims in the press that McDonnell is preparing a "coup" against Corbyn.

Yet Labour's leadership has always hoped that by appealing to the right for unity they can get Labour elected and

implement at least some left wing policies.

McDonnell talked left to the rally on Monday. He said Labour's next election manifesto would be "even more radical" than it was in 2017.

The rally was meant to gear activists up for a coming general election.

Snap

Labour members generally agreed the party had been right to avoid pushing for a snap election until No Deal had been stopped.

But constantly delaying the election has also left them in limbo—and increasingly demoralised.

Many activists thought an election would be difficult.

"We've got a hell of a fight on our hands," one told Socialist Worker. "But if we're feeling positive about it we can do it."

Corbyn told the rally, "I don't know exactly when the election is going to come. I wish I did. If I did I would tell you."

Yet Corbyn could trigger an election at any time by tabling a vote of no confidence in Johnson's government.

Activists and ordinary people shouldn't wait any longer to get rid of the Tories.

John McDonnell

'Look at radical ideas'

ACTIVISTS AT the rally had different opinions on how Labour could win an election.

One told Socialist Worker, "I don't think we're going to win in Scotland."

"In England it depends on did or did they not vote for Brexit."

"Labour's Brexit policy suits me. But I don't think the Remain message goes down well with people who voted for Brexit."

Another said, "Labour will definitely, sadly, have to commit to Remain—even if that would alienate a lot of the heartlands."

"It would be low paid workers who feel the pain of Brexit."

One young activist said Labour could unite working class people with "a radical socialist alternative".

"We have to look at new ideas," they said. "In some areas, don't be afraid of being more radical."



Got a story?

Email ideas to reports@socialistworker.co.uk

New Tory immigration policies spark outrage from migrants

The Tories' plans will mean some people will be forced to leave Britain under the new scheme. Anti-racists should rip apart the racist border system, writes **Tomáš Tengely-Evans**

THE TORIES have struck more fear into European Union (EU) migrants living in Britain.

Home Office minister Brandon Lewis admitted that the government might deport some EU nationals after Brexit.

He said the Tories would "apply the rules" to those who had not registered under the EU Settlement Scheme by the deadline of 2021. This means that migrants who met the legal requirements for remaining in Britain could be forced to leave.

Maike Bohne of the 3 Million campaign group slammed the Tory minister's admission. He said, "We have pressed the government for years on what happens to those who do not have a status in 2021."

"Today, after much waiting, it is confirmed that hundreds and thousands of people will be punished with the threat of removal from their home."

"This is no way to treat people, let alone what was promised."

The EU Settlement Scheme is already facing a growing backlog of applications. Just over 1.8 million of the three million EU migrants living in Britain had applied, according to the latest Home Office figures.

Only just over 1.5 million migrants have had their applications resolved. And not all of them were given settled status—some had the inferior "pre-settled status", other had "other outcomes".

Forward

The deadline for applying for EU settled status could move forward to 31 December 2020.

While the Tories have backed off from plans to immediately end free movement now, they have confirmed that they plan to do so. And they are starting to flesh out their new immigration system.

Home secretary Priti Patel has said the new rules would be based on a "points-based immigration system".

This would "score" migrants based on their skills, education and their expected income in Britain.

Only those with a high enough score—arbitrarily labelled as the "brightest and the best"—would be allowed in. This has the false implication that some, mainly poorer migrants are a drain on resources.

Patel floated the idea of awarding a higher score to migrants who agreed to live in the North of England.

Labour's shadow home secretary Diane Abbott said the said it was a "fallacy" the country only needed "so-called skilled workers". "The



AROUND 70 anti-fascists opposed a group of around 20 fascists who marched through Dewsbury in West Yorkshire Saturday

PICTURE: NEIL TERRY

NHS has shortages of more than 100,000 staff and we need doctors, nurses, hospital porters, chefs and cleaners," she said.

Unfortunately, Labour is also promising a "skills-based immigration system" after Brexit. The Labour conference passed a motion calling for the party to defend free movement and shut down all immigration detention centres.

But within a matter of hours the party leadership appeared to back off from the plans.

Anti-racists should fight to dismantle Britain's racist immigration system. That means fighting to defend and extend freedom of movement, shut down all immigration detention centres, and grant refugees and asylum seekers the right to stay in Britain.

'Oval Four' face a fresh appeal

FOUR BLACK men who were sent to prison on the word of a corrupt cop could finally be cleared after nearly 50 years.

Winston Trew, Sterling Christie, George Griffiths and Constantine Boucher, known as the "Oval Four" group of defendants, were arrested outside Oval Tube station in south London in 1972.

There they were stopped by a group of undercover officers led by detective Derek Ridgewell. He had previously worked for the police in racist South Rhodesia—modern



Winston Trew in 1973

day Zimbabwe—in southern Africa.

Winston Trew applied to have the convictions overturned after another successful appeal in a case involving Ridgewell. The four were accused of stealing handbags and assaulting the police.

They were held in a police cell overnight and beaten, then sent down for two years after a five-week trial at the Old Bailey court.

The arrests happened at a time when right wing politicians and the press had whipped up a racist scare about black men carrying out street robberies. Ridgewell was also responsible for the arrest of the Stockwell Six, the Waterloo Four and the Tottenham Court Road Two—all black people.

The judge in the last case noticed a suspicious pattern.

Ridgewell was moved to a police department investigating theft at post offices.

He was later jailed for seven years after working with two criminals who split money from stolen mail bags. Two of the Oval Four have now had their cases referred to the court of appeal. The other two left Britain in the 1970s.

Stand up to Racism conference—19 October, Friends House, 173-177 Euston Road, London NW1 2BJ. Visit <http://bit.ly/sutrconf>

The racist media complain

THE RIGHT wing press is complaining that the Tories haven't deported enough refugees.

A Sky News investigation found that 6 percent of refugees who had crossed the English Channel had been deported.

It complained that this is "in spite of warnings by Boris Johnson that they would be sent back".

There has been a rise in the number of refugees trying to make it across the channel.

This has been fuelled by increasing brutality from the police after an agreement between British and French authorities to increase border security that was reached at the end of August.

They levelled makeshift refugee settlements in Calais and Dunkirk, scattering many across northern France.

Racist policies won't make the migrant crisis disappear

The only solution is to open the border and let the refugees in safely.



IN BRIEF

Algerians take to streets over poll

PROTESTERS IN Algeria took to the streets last Friday in their largest numbers for several weeks.

They rejected the authorities' decision to hold a presidential election in December with banners reading, "We will not shut up," "We are not ready to stop," and, "I will not vote."

The grassroots protest movement has rejected the December poll as long as some of former president Abdelaziz Bouteflika's allies are still in office, saying it could not be free or fair.

Bouteflika stepped down in April under pressure from mass protests that broke out in February.

The authorities have piled pressure on demonstrators in recent weeks by detaining opposition figures.

In a particularly vicious example Louisa Hanoune, the leader and three-time presidential candidate of the Workers Party, was sentenced to 15 years in jail.

US car workers' strike continues

BOSSSES AT General Motors (GM) in the US offered a new contract, as a strike of nearly 50,000 United Auto Workers union (UAW) workers entered its fifth week on Monday.

The new offer includes a pay rise of 3 percent. Bosses also say they will make temporary workers permanent after three years of service.

Negotiations are continuing, as the new offer does not address the reopening of closed plants. UAW has raised strike pay by £20 a week.

The strike started on 16 September and is costing GM an estimated £72.3 million a day.

Protesters defy China's threats

PRO-DEMOCRACY protests continued in Hong Kong last weekend, while China ramped up threats against demonstrators.

China's president Xi Jinping said on Sunday, "Anyone who attempts to split any region from China will perish, with their bodies smashed and bones ground to powder."

Big protests in Hong Kong on Sunday saw police injuring people after rushing into a shopping centre.

Protesters threw petrol bombs at Mong Kok police station.

Last week cops revealed that 750 of the 2,379 people arrested since the movement began in June are children.

DEMONSTRATORS SURROUND a police vehicle in the Ecuadorian capital Quito

Protests in Ecuador force government to back down

by GABBY THORPE

PROTESTERS IN Ecuador have forced the government to cancel an austerity package that caused two weeks of violent demonstration across the South American country.

Some 1,152 demonstrators were arrested, and seven were killed in clashes with police. The protests were so widespread that the government fled the capital, Quito.

The deal was announced on Monday morning. It means that Ecuador's president, Lenin Moreno, will withdraw the package enforced by the International Monetary Fund.

At its heart was the removal of fuel subsidies, causing prices to soar. A rise in fuel prices would inevitably lead to a rise in food prices.

The unrest caused Moreno to call a two-month state of emergency, with a curfew in place.

The protests were originally called by transport unions when Moreno unveiled his new decree on fuel subsidies on 1 October.

They held strikes, and other groups of workers also took action.

But indigenous people have become the leaders of the movement, and are the most vocal in demanding justice.

Movements led by indigenous people in Ecuador have toppled three presidents in recent decades.

Luis Iguamba, leader of the north

Ecuadorian Kayambi people said, "We are fighting for everyone and we are fighting to foresee the rights we all have and we can't allow this."

Protesters took around 50 police officers hostage in various locations, and still held some when the deal was reached.

The Confederation for Indigenous Nations in Ecuador (Conaie) declared a "state of exception" in indigenous areas, where police would be detained and face indigenous justice.

They also blocked roads, forcing the closure of dozens of businesses including dairy and flower farms.

The police response has

seen demonstrators defending themselves against rubber bullets and tear gas. Many carried sharpened sticks and used satellite dishes and plywood as makeshift shields.

In nationally broadcast negotiating sessions on Sunday, the president of Conaie, Jaime Vargas, demanded the immediate cancellation of Moreno's fuel subsidy proposal.

He said, "This isn't a demand of the indigenous people, it's the demand of the country."

He went on to ask for more rights for indigenous people.

He said, "We want peace for our

brothers and sisters in this country. We don't want more repression."

Other demands included higher taxes for the rich and the firing of the interior and defence ministers for their repressive response to the protests.

The government has agreed to work with indigenous leaders at the forefront of demonstrations to formulate a new plan which will reduce Ecuador's debt whilst reinstating subsidies.

The austerity package has left millions in debt.

Many have said that they will continue to protest until Moreno has been forced out.

GERMANY

Standing up to antisemitism

THOUSANDS OF protesters gathered last weekend across Germany after an attack on a synagogue in Halle.

Two people were killed, one outside the synagogue and a second at a nearby kebab shop.

A man has confessed to the shooting, citing "antisemitic and right wing extremist views".

The attack comes at the same time as a rise in far right groups such as Alternative for Germany and Pegida.

Marching against antisemitism in Berlin

Labour in Doncaster

THERE IS quite a mixed attitude towards Labour in Doncaster (Socialist Worker, 9 October)

Partly this is because Labour has been in office in the town for most of the last 20 years, and Labour in Doncaster is quite right wing.

A lot of local people see the Labour council as having implemented austerity. And they also view the three Labour MPs as sellouts.

When Jeremy Corbyn first became leader, he addressed a 600-strong rally in Doncaster.

But as time has gone on, attitudes over Brexit have really hardened.

A lot of people say they have no fear of a no-deal Brexit because their lives are already so shit.

And many see Remainers as liberal or middle class. There's a kind of class instinct to it—some people think that the well off should suffer for once.

The constant smearing of Corbyn has played a part in how people see Labour as well.

And his vacillation over Brexit is a major issue.

Some working class people say they support the Tories. But I think we have to constantly remember the genuine hatred of the Tories that many of them have.

We have to attack the notion that Boris Johnson is a "man of the people" too.

And the issue of trust is important.

Nobody should think Johnson or the Tories can be trusted—everything they say is a lie.

Jim Board

Unison branch secretary,
Doncaster (pc)



ILLUSTRATION: TIM SANDERS

A hard working life, and now my pension has been stolen

THIS MONTH I will be 62, but there will be no real happy birthday feeling until I am 66.

That's due to the cruel injustice of the Conservatives raising the state pension age to 66 for women born in the 1950s.

And disappointingly a recent court decision found in the government's favour.

I get by on £256.90 a fortnight Employment Support Allowance. I have applied for Personal Independence Payment several times and been turned down.

I have several severe health conditions. But to get my benefits I have to attend face to face medical assessments.

To slightly offset the pension

theft, this degrading process should cease for women born in the 1950s

My working life has been hard graft—manual employment.

It has been low paid and I've often had several part-time jobs in order to make ends meet.

I have often had to battle for my wages and once went through an eight-month legal struggle to get money I was entitled to from an outsourcing cleaning company.

Even though I won at an employment tribunal, I ended up without a job.

I live in social housing for over 50s but do not use the bedroom as it would mean heating another room.

I don't sleep well anyway, partly due to anxiety about how I will survive until I am 66.

The government says it raised the pension age to ensure equality with men. Why can't everyone retire at a fair age?

One of the reasons I was looking forward to my state pension is that it would be the most money I will have earned throughout my working life.

Women are often pushed into part-time and low paid work—supermarkets, cleaning, caring and kitchens.

If this government thinks there is equality, it is deluded.

Sonja Molyneux
Halifax

Let members vote on who leads GMB union

DEMOCRACY IS the lifeblood of the trade union movement—or at least it ought to be.

So the decision by my union, the GMB, to exclude the only potential challenger to the current general secretary without putting it to the membership is shocking.

Tim Roache, the general secretary is up for re-election. Two other candidates came forward.

One received just two branch nominations and pulled out. Another,

Kathleen Walker Shaw, received 57 nominations, from eight out of the nine regions. This meant she qualified to stand.

But then the GMB ruled that Walker was not capable of performing the range of duties required by the post. Walker has worked for the union for 26 years.

I hold no torch for Walker. But surely it should be up to the members to decide. Coronations are for monarchs, not trade unions.

A GMB member
By email

Benefit pledges are a reason for hope

YOUR REPORT on Jeremy Corbyn's pledge to scrap Universal Credit (UC) underestimated the scale of the issue by a factor of 1,000 (Socialist Worker, 2 October).

Millions, not thousands, would have cheered that pledge.

Since 2010, 4.5 million benefit sanctions have been dished out, including 32,500 sanctions of three years' duration.

Wherever UC has been rolled out it has caused increases in foodbank use, sanctions, rent arrears, evictions, and destitution.



Around 2.5 million people are already on UC, with another 4.5 million due to have it inflicted on them.

Corbyn also announced that Labour would scrap

benefit sanctions, the bedroom tax, work capability assessments, the two child limit and the benefit cap.

These key policy shifts give 7 million people something to vote for and are essential for Labour to win the election.

We can beat the Tories and get rid of UC.

In this pre-election period, posters demanding "Scrap Universal Credit" and "Stop all benefit sanctions now" need to be widely displayed.

Sean McDermott
Glasgow

Just a thought...

Unions' wrong reply on Syria

I WAS delighted to hear that 13 British trade union secretaries had issued a statement condemning the Turkish invasion of northern Syria. Then I read it.

It attacks the invasion but then says the British government must "work with the international community to deploy an international force and enforce a No-Fly Zone".

In a region wracked by imperialist intervention, union leaders are calling for more imperialist intervention.

Sally Hughes
West London

Labour & SNP means indyref

THE TORIES will not allow another referendum on Scottish independence however many people march for it (Socialist Worker, 9 October).

The best hope is to get a government made up of Labour and the Scottish National Party. Jeremy Corbyn would have to agree to a new indyref to be prime minister.

Mary Ford
Dumfries

Otis will need support again

OTIS BOLAMU is an asylum seeker living in Swansea who was saved from deportation by a big campaign last Christmas.

He is once again under threat of deportation. Please be ready to stop him being thrown out.

Helen Jones
Swansea

Joker's rage pleased me

I'M GLAD I saw the film Joker (Socialist Worker, 9 October) and would recommend it.

It is an excellent political allegory set in Gotham City in the 1980s but could be anywhere now.

One of the best scenes in the movie is when Joker is advised by his social worker that the people who run society just don't give a shit about him.

The ending is terrific as the back-stabbers, the cops, the rich and powerful "get what they deserve"—an uprising and more!

Jim Barlow
Dundee

CARNIVAL OF RESISTANCE ON LONDON'S STREETS

Rebels from Extinction Rebellion took over some of the most famous streets in London in a bid to force action on climate change. **Sarah Bates** joined the people braving arrests and media attacks with brilliant displays of creativity and resistance

Westminster, in the heart of London, was transformed into a carnival of resistance last week by thousands of Extinction Rebellion (XR) activists.

Rebels camped out in central London—including areas that are normally reserved for the rich and powerful—to demand government and corporations “act now” on the climate emergency.

It's been an explosion of creativity, cooperation and courage. And, despite heavy-handed police tactics, protesters are resilient.

Four days into the International Rebellion, all but two of the planned 12 occupations in London had been shut down by the cops.

They seized kitchens, toilets and other makeshift facilities that activists call “infrastructure”—all in a bid to make it too uncomfortable for those trying to maintain the protests day and night.

Nevertheless, rebels built wooden structures from plywood boxes and locked themselves to it, while others were chained to bathtubs. Some simply managed to climb on top of statues or vans.

Hundreds of other people sat in the road, as waves of cops moved through the crowd intermittently arresting people.

As rebels are carted off—usually by four cops, one holding each limp limb—hundreds of people cheer and



SIGNS AND banners hang everywhere around XR actions in London (above) Activists lock-on to a makeshift structure (right)

chant their thanks. But among the action, there was also the surreal. As the sit-in was entertained by a Punch and Judy show, a giant giraffe puppet meandered through the crowd.

Many activists are on the streets because of the political conclusions they've drawn.

One rebel told Socialist Worker that XR's tactics are distinct from those who look to lifestyle choices as a way to stop climate change.

“I saw a live broadcast from Noam Chomsky, who's this old school activist and a really smart dude,” she said. “He said that unfortunately we're too far gone for any individual changes to make a difference—going vegan, deciding not to fly and so on.

“Doing those things is great but it won't make a difference. What we need is a systemic change, and he mentioned some activist groups, and he mentioned XR.”

She said that joining the group had given her a “sense of community”.

Everyone comes to XR with their own take on the climate crisis.

The activists in white coats demand we “teach the truth” and call on politicians to listen to climate scientists.

Others focus on the spiritual aspect of environmental and ecological breakdown.

Some rebels use elaborate costumes or street theatre pieces to get across their point, while others focus on the need for renewable energy and a sustainable world.

Despite the differences of



emphasis, all find a way of working together.

Meanwhile, at the art stations, some activists are printing the famous XR stencil on to anything that will stand still for long enough.

Others are painting “no alcohol, no drugs” banners to be hung in the occupation.

XR Muslims hold a people's assembly a short distance from someone conducting yoga sessions while others grind vegan spice mixtures and run a clown school.

Thousands of rebels gathered at St James's Park, having previously been at other road blocks that were moved on by police.

As they become aware that the cops intend to evict them, two rebels on bikes powering a generator conduct an impromptu “temperature

check” to see what the group want to do.

Of the options suggested by the crowd, they collectively decide to hold the space, rather than join rebels at the other camp, or attempt to kettle the police.

To prevent cops from taking their kitchen, activists prepare to link arms and surround important infrastructure.

XR has faced a host of attacks—from the media, the police and right wing politicians.

Despite this, rebels are building a movement that has managed to face down repeated pressure from the state—and are having fun while doing it.

They are raising demands for a radical transformation of society, and creating a space to fight for that.



EXTINCTION REBELLION activists sit-in at London's City Airport last week (main) Tim (right) locked on to the street says people need to step outside their 'comfort zone' PICTURES: GUY SMALLMAN AND SOCIALIST WORKER

‘I have been to UN climate conferences since 2005’
Rachel
Ex-NGO worker

FOR COMING up to twenty years I've worked on climate change and the impact on developing countries. Since 2005, I've gone to UN climate conferences to plead their case.

There was nothing happening. No money to support them and no agreement on cutting emissions.

I've been on the climate marches, sedately walking from Hyde Park Corner to wherever, but they were usually on the weekend.

And the route chosen, or the route agreed with the police, we just didn't see anybody, and we didn't get any media coverage either.

XR feels different—all the protests I went on were non-violent but this has a different flavour.

After this I suppose we just need another rebellion, it will just go on until there's action, and of course that will mean a change of government.

Labour's got some good policies, I don't generally vote Labour, I vote Green. But I think if there was a hung parliament and the right coalition was formed, action could come.



Rachel (left)



Esther



Rachel (right)



Laura



Liv

‘This is about realising we're not on our own’
Laura

I'M HERE for my son Theo—having him has just really brought the climate change emergency to a whole other level.

I feel responsible and emotional, and I feel like I don't have any choice but to be here.

I'm worried about what conditions he'll have to live in, and how it will affect future generations. I think it's down to us parents to educate children, to really drill into them perhaps what wasn't drilled into us.

‘I don't want to stand on the sidelines’
Esther

I'M JOINING the sit-in because I want to make as much impact as possible. If there's requests to have people in the road I'm joining in, I don't want to just stand on the sidelines. I feel like I've sat on the sidelines for too long.

It's all very well talking about how you want change, you can talk until you're blue in the face but you have to absolutely do something to make a difference—I can't expect other



‘I've been locked on to this steel and concrete structure for a few hours now.’
Tim Former teacher

I'M HERE because for a long, long time people have been demonstrating and asking for change and nothing, or very little, has happened.

We feel now that the only thing we can do is to break the rules and to do something different.

And that's partly to get more attention, it's partly to cause disruption so the state listens to us. It's also to send a message to other people that we feel that a radical change is needed on all levels and we are willing to make

a sacrifice. This a relatively small sacrifice compared to what a lot of other people are doing in other places in far more oppressive regimes.

We need to remember that in lots of countries there are people doing similar things but they're being killed or tortured and so this is the least I can do to try make a difference.

I feel OK about getting arrested.

I was a teacher until recently, and having a criminal record could affect my career, but to be honest I feel that if everybody just thinks about their own future and their own security then we're all in real trouble.

So I think we have to start stepping outside of that comfort zone and giving up something, making a sacrifice, and to me it just seems obvious that that's the right thing to do.

people to make it happen for me.

I've never been to a protest before, so I don't know if the cop's behaviour is normal or whether they're just being dickheads.

‘There can be change from the ground up’
Liv

IT'S BOTH heartwarming to see so many people come together, but it's also deeply distressing because it shows the absolute need for action.

It shows how messed up we've let our planet become, that so many people are saying ‘we need to do something, and we need to do it now.’

There can be change, and it's always from the ground up.

‘I'm waving octopus tentacles around’
Rachel

WHEN I was a student in the 1980s I remember going to Greenham Common peace camp but I haven't done this kind of protesting for a long time.

I'm just here for two days, I'm going to spend them waving octopus tentacles around and washing up in the kitchen.

WHAT WE STAND FOR

These are the core politics of the Socialist Workers Party.

INDEPENDENT WORKING CLASS ACTION

Under capitalism workers' labour creates all profit. A socialist society can only be constructed when the working class seizes control of the means of production and democratically plans how they are used.

REVOLUTION NOT REFORM

The present system cannot be patched up or reformed as the established Labour and trade union leaders say.

It has to be overthrown. Capitalism systematically degrades the natural world. Ending environmental crisis means creating a new society.

THERE IS NO PARLIAMENTARY ROAD

The structures of the present parliament, army, police and judiciary cannot be taken over and used by the working class. They grew up under capitalism and are designed to protect the ruling class against the workers.

The working class needs an entirely different kind of state—a workers' state based upon councils of workers' delegates and a workers' militia.

At most parliamentary activity can be used to make propaganda against the present system.

Only the mass action of the workers themselves can destroy the system.

INTERNATIONALISM

The struggle for socialism is part of a worldwide struggle. We campaign for solidarity with workers in other countries.

We oppose everything which turns workers from one country against those from other countries.

We oppose racism and imperialism. We oppose all immigration controls.

We support the right of black people and other oppressed groups to organise their own defence. We support all genuine national liberation movements.

The experience of Russia demonstrates that a socialist revolution cannot survive in isolation in one country.

In Russia the result was state capitalism, not socialism. In Eastern Europe and China a similar system was later established by Stalinist parties. We support the struggle of workers in these countries against both private and state capitalism.

We are for real social, economic and political equality of women. We are for an end to all forms of discrimination against lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people.

We defend the right of believers to practise their religion without state interference.

THE REVOLUTIONARY PARTY

To achieve socialism the most militant sections of the working class have to be organised into a revolutionary socialist party.

Such a party can only be built by activity in the mass organisations of the working class.

We have to prove in practice to other workers that reformist leaders and reformist ideas are opposed to their own interests. We have to build a rank and file movement within the unions.

To join us, turn to page 16 or go to www.swp.org.uk or phone 020 7840 5602 for more information

{ SOCIALIST WORKER } PUBLIC MEETINGS

LONDON: NEWHAM

Booklaunch: A rebel's guide to Alexandra Kollontai

Wed 30 Oct, 7pm,
Stratford Advice Arcade,
107-109 The Grove (next
to Morrisons car park),
E15 1HP

LONDON: WEST & NORTHWEST

Legalise! The case for decriminalising drugs

Thu 24 Oct, 7.30pm,
Woodlane Community Centre,
78 White City Cl,
Shepherd's Bush,
W12 7DZ

{ SOCIALIST WORKER } BRANCH MEETINGS

Weekly meetings to discuss political issues and our local interventions. All welcome.

ABERDEEN

Marxism, strikes and trade unions

Mon 21 Oct, 6pm,
The Snug,
Ma Cameron's,
6-8 Little Belmont St,
AB10 1JG

BARNSELEY

The climate crisis—refugee emergency

Thu 24 Oct, 7pm,
Room 302, The Civic,
Hanson St,
S70 2HZ

BOLTON

Automaton—is a robot after your job?

Wed 23 Oct, 7pm,
Bolton Socialist Club,
16 Wood St (off
Bradshawgate),
BL1 1DY

BURNLEY AND PENDLE

Rebellions and disobedience—the politics of direct action

Wed 23 Oct, 7.30pm,
Red Triangle Cafe,
160 St James's St,
BB11 1NR

CARDIFF

Is human nature a barrier to socialism?

Wed 23 Oct, 7.30pm,
Cathays Community Centre,
Cathays Terrace,
CF24 4HX

CHESTERFIELD

Is Marx still relevant?

Thu 24 Oct, 7pm,
Chesterfield Library,
New Beetwell St,
S40 1QN

COLCHESTER

Gandhi, non-violence and civil disobedience

Thu 31 Oct, 8pm,
Oyster Room, Hythe
Community Centre,
1 Ventura Drive,
CO1 2FG



SURGING WAVES in Japan last week

Booklaunches System change not climate change



Available for £8 (plus £2.50 p+p) from Bookmarks, the socialist bookshop. Phone 020 7637 1848 or go to bookmarksbookshop.co.uk

BIRMINGHAM

Wed 23 Oct, 7pm,
The Priory Rooms,
Quaker Meeting House,
40 Bull St,
B4 6AF

BRISTOL

Thu 24 Oct, 7.30pm,
YHA,
14 Narrow Quay,
BS1 4QA

KENT

Thu 14 Nov, 7.30pm,
Nucleus Arts Centre
(Conference Room),
272 High St,
Chatham,
ME4 4BP

LONDON: CENTRAL

Wed 23 Oct, 6.30pm,
The 52 Club,
Bonham Carter House,
52 Gower St,
WC1E 6EB

DERBY

Sexism and the system

Thu 24 Oct, 7pm,
West End Community Centre,
Mackworth Rd (next
to Britannia Mill),
DE22 3BL

DUDLEY

A rebel's guide to Malcolm X

Wed 23 Oct, 8pm,
The What Centre,
23 Coventry St,
Stourbridge,
DY8 1EP

EDINBURGH

What has happened to the pink tide in Latin America?

Wed 23 Oct, 7.30pm,
Friends Meeting House,
7 Victoria St, EH1 2JL

GLASGOW

The Anti Nazi League—lessons for today

Thu 24 Oct, 7pm,
Avant Garde,
33-44 King St, G1 5QT

LANCASTER AND MORECAMBE

How can we get from capitalism to socialism?

Thu 24 Oct, 7pm,
Friends Meeting House,
Meeting House Lane, LA1 1TX

LEEDS: CITY CENTRE

Strikes, mutinies and riots—1919 Britain on the brink

Thu 24 Oct, 7pm,
The Swarthmore
Education Centre,
2-7 Woodhouse Square,
LS3 1AD

LONDON: HACKNEY

The Peekskill riots—a lesson for today

Thu 24 Oct, 7.30pm,
The Round Chapel,
2 Powerscroft Rd,
E5 0PU

LONDON: HARINGEY

Aretha Franklin—singing the gospel of civil rights

Wed 23 Oct, 7.30pm,
St John Vianney Church Hall,
386 West Green Rd,
N15 3QH

LONDON: ISLINGTON

Gandhi, non-violence and civil disobedience

Thu 24 Oct, 7pm,
Elizabeth House, 2 Hurlock St,
Highbury, N5 1ED

LONDON: NEWHAM

Capital, empire and slavery—the roots of racism

Wed 23 Oct, 7pm,
Stratford Advice Arcade,
107-109 The Grove, E15 1HP

LONDON: SOUTH

What does real democracy look like?

Wed 23 Oct, 7pm,
Vida Walsh Centre,
2b Saltoun Rd, SW2 1EP

LONDON: WALTHAM FOREST

Angela Davis—women, race and class

Wed 23 Oct, 7.30pm,
William Morris
Community Centre,
6-8 Greenleaf Rd,
Walthamstow, E17 6QQ

MANCHESTER: CENTRAL

Hong Kong, mass protests and the working class

Wed 23 Oct, 7pm,
Friends Meeting House,
6 Mount St,
M2 5NS

NEWCASTLE

What are the roots of racism and how do we fight it?

Wed 23 Oct, 7pm,
Floor 2, Commercial
Union House,
39 Pilgrim St, NE1 6QE

NORWICH

Why we oppose all border controls

Wed 23 Oct, 7.30pm,
Vauxhall Centre,
Johnson Place, NR2 2SA

OXFORD

Is our diet destroying the planet?

Thu 24 Oct, 7pm,
Restore Building,
Manzil Way,
OX4 1YH

SCARBOROUGH

Revolution and the state

Wed 23 Oct, 7.30pm,
Tap and Spile,
94 Falsgrave Rd, YO12 5AZ

SHEFFIELD

Why should we celebrate the Russian Revolution?

Thu 24 Oct, 7.00pm,
Central United
Reformed Church,
60 Norfolk St, S1 2JB

SOUTHAMPTON

A rebel's guide to Alexandra Kollontai

Wed 23 Oct, 7.30pm,
Central Baptist Church Hall,
Devonshire Rd, SO15 2GY

SWANSEA

Trump and imperialism—could he start a war with Iran?

Thu 24 Oct, 7.30pm,
Brynmill Community Centre,
St Albans Rd, SA2 0BP

TELFORD

Migration and climate change

Wed 13 Nov, 7.30pm,
The Roy Fletcher Centre,
17 Cross Hill, SY1 1JE

WIGAN

Revolution and the state

Thu 24 Oct, 7pm,
The Anvil,
Dorning St, WN1 1HE

WOLVERHAMPTON

AND WALSALL

Whose law? Whose order?

Wed 23 Oct, 7.15pm,
Light House,
Suite 16, Chubb Bldg,
Fryer St, WV1 1HT

{ MOVEMENT EVENTS }

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For details and to book go to bit.ly/MIS2019

PORTSMOUTH

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A super-powered mixture of adventure and family drama

Raising Dion mixes superhero staples with life's everyday problems—and the result is a show that's pathbreaking for both genres, says **Tomáš Tengely-Evans**

RAISING DION is a classic coming-of-age story that breaks new ground.

Widow Nicole and her eight-year old son Dion are grieving after Mark (Michael B Jordan) died saving a supposed stranger in a freak storm in New Orleans.

Dion discovers he has supernatural powers with comic effect. He levitates bowls of milk, starts a Lego hurricane, and lifts fish out of a lake in bubbles of water.

His superpowers become more spectacular—and darker—as he battles against the villain he calls The Crooked Man.

The show follows a well-trodden superhero formula.

A young protagonist struggles to control forces bigger than themselves—both their new superpowers and the angst of adolescence.

But the plot and special effects are captivating enough to make it seem original.

Fun

Alongside the family-friendly fun, the storylines are very real at times. Nicole's attempts to keep Dion's superpowers secret are interwoven with the family's everyday struggles.

She can hardly pay for Dion's asthma medication after losing her job—and her health insurance plan.

These sorts of problems aren't typically found in the middle class, white idylls of staple US family dramas from the 2000s.

Writer and producer Dennis Liu is part of a bigger movement to make superhero stories more diverse.

Raising Dion comes off the back of films that put black characters centre stage, such as smash hit Black Panther or Netflix's Luke Cage. There



DION DISCOVERS his superpowers

aren't many shows that have a black single mother and her son as the heroes.

Dion's classmate and best friend, Esperanza, is a wheelchair user and his aunt is a black lesbian.

But raising Dion doesn't simply congratulate itself on how representative it is.

In one scene a white teacher tries to suspend Dion after a white pupil stole his watch, assuming he is "a bad

kid". Nicole struggles to find a way to tell him that the "world's going to slap him down every chance it gets" because of racism.

Dion wonders why the teacher has "bad ideas about the colour of people's skin" because he thought Martin Luther King had sorted it all out.

In another episode Dion unexpectedly levitates Esperanza and moves her legs in a bid to make her walk. They have a big row because he did it

without permission, leading the show to look at respecting people's boundaries and consent.

This could make for a show that is obviously trying too hard to be woke.

But the way it's done is nuanced and sophisticated. And while the show's subplots—the superpower vs the everyday—feel disjointed at times, they're brought together brilliantly at the end.

Available now on Netflix

New crime thriller doesn't quite live up to ambition

TELEVISION

GIRI/HAJI

Starts 9pm, 17 October
On BBC2 and BBC iPlayer

AMBITIOUS IS a good way to describe Giri/Haji (Duty/Shame).

Bringing together celebrated Japanese and British actors, this new crime thriller tells a wide-ranging story spanning Tokyo and London.

Tokyo detective Kenzo (Takehiro Hira) finds himself caught up in a chain reaction set off by

the murder of a Japanese businessman.

He goes to London to track down his brother and crosses paths with British detective Sarah (Kelly Macdonald).

It's a fast paced and entertaining story. Yet for a show that's meant to be all about interweaving chains of events, many of those events feel slightly too implausible.

The lead actors make a sometimes wooden script feel natural. You have to suspend your disbelief just a bit more than usual to



TAKEHIRO HIRA (right) as Kenzo

PICTURE: BBC / SISTER PICTURES

really get into this. But if you do, it's very enjoyable.

Visually it's sleek, playing with different styles sparingly and to good effect.

Flashbacks look like neo-noir films, stories are painted in Japanese watercolour.

As for its ambition, it might not have the depth or complexity it aims for—at least not yet.

But the scale and scope of it make it one of the best and most unusual shows on television at the moment.

ART

ROY LICHTENSTEIN

The Hatton Gallery,
Newcastle University.
Until 4 January 2020

A PIONEER of pop art, Roy Lichtenstein is best-known for his paintings based on comic strips, advertising, and adaptations of works by other artists.

Iconic, entertaining and graphically appealing, Lichtenstein's legacy remains enduring.

This exhibition explores many of the themes that interested Lichtenstein throughout his career, such as the history of art, a fascination with reflections



Reflections on Crash

and mirroring, and his love of musical and visual composition.

At its centre is a series of impressive large-scale screen prints made in the 1990s, towards the end of the artist's life

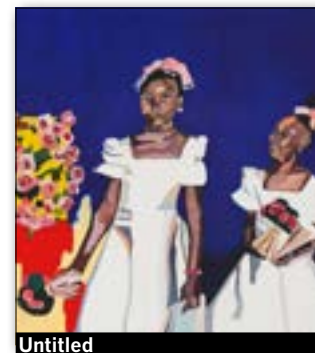
ART

JOY LABINJO

At the Baltic, Gateshead
19 October–23 February 2020

JOY LABINJO makes large-scale paintings featuring portraits of relatives, friends and people she has discovered in family albums.

Drawing on her personal experiences of growing up in Britain with British-Nigerian



Untitled

heritage, Labinjo explores the relationship between identity, race and culture.

The artist's paintings depict intimate scenes of contemporary family life, capturing the everyday and the domestic.

She creates her compositions by fusing different photographs, collaging interiors and figures.

THE YEAR 1919 saw some of the most intense workers' struggles ever in Britain.

Soldiers protested about how slowly they were demobilised—or that they were being sent instead to fight for imperial interests in Ireland, Russia, the Middle East and India.

There were 34 million strike days and mass resistance to the government and the bosses.

A secret service report given to prime minister David Lloyd George in January 1919 showed their worries and their racism.

“In England Bolshevism must be faced and grappled with, the efforts of international Jews of Russia combatted, and their agents eliminated from the United Kingdom,” it read.

“Unless some serious consideration is given to the matter, I believe that there will be some sort of revolution in this country and that before 12 months are past.”

But amidst the militancy there was also racism. White mobs attacked black people—mostly merchant seamen—during 1919, in some of the worst race riots in British history.

Five people were killed, dozens injured and at least 250 arrested.

Riots took place in Glasgow, South Shields, Salford, Hull, London, Liverpool, Newport, Cardiff and Barry between January and August.

“Crowds of white working class people thousands strong targeted minority ethnic groups including African, African-Caribbean, ‘Arab’, south Asian and Chinese workers,” writes Jacqueline Jenkinson in her book *Black 1919*.

Encouraged

“Colonial” troops and merchant seamen had been encouraged to come to help Britain’s war effort. This loosened the pre-war imperial racial hierarchy—and Britain’s rulers wanted a return to it.

In July 1919 15,000 troops marched through central London to celebrate the signing of the treaty that officially ended the First World War.

Organisers decreed that no non-white troops would participate.

A tidal wave of racism spread across the world. The US saw murderous race riots. In East St Louis alone rioters killed at least 39 black people.

The British merchant fleet already relied on a significant number of “lascars” who had established small communities in port cities. The term originally meant Indian sailors, but could refer to any non-white sailor.

Many lascars were first recruited in ports abroad on lower wages. Then, as now, the



IN THE engine room—Asian sailors, known as Lascars, joined the British merchant navy

1919 RACE RIOTS IN BRITAIN A LEGACY OF EMPIRE

One hundred years ago Britain was gripped by huge workers’ struggles but also horrific race riots. Ken Olende looks at how the racist violence was unleashed—and how some of the left organised against it



Claude McKay

way to beat the bosses’ divide and rule tactic was to demand equal wages for all workers.

Instead the biggest seafarers’ union, the National Sailors’ and Firemen’s Union (NSFU), campaigned to keep “colonial” sailors off the ships.

The TUC union federation passed a resolution in September 1919 demanding “immediate steps be taken to abolish all underpaid Asiatic labour in the mercantile marine, and that preference of



Britain’s rulers wanted a return to the pre-war imperial racial hierarchy

employment be given, first to white, then to British coloured, in preference to Chinamen”.

The small immigrant communities made convenient scapegoats.

In Poplar, east London, a rumour that a Chinese man and his British wife got housing previously refused to a demobbed man sparked a riot.

The first of the race riots broke out in Glasgow and some of those involved were trade unionists. Manny Shinwell had

been one of the leaders of an upsurge in workers’ struggle in Glasgow that became known as Red Clydeside. He led the Glasgow branch of the British Seafarers Union (BSU), which barred black members.

Shinwell faced racist abuse from the bosses as a “Jew tailor”.

Yet he had spoken at a BSU meeting outside the shipyard opposing the employment of Chinese workers.

Some of the crowd attacked a group of about 30 black sailors from Britain’s colony of Sierra Leone. The sailors fled, eventually reaching their lodgings on Broomielaw.

Here, some managed to hold the mob back by firing shots. One white rioter was wounded. Another was stabbed, as was one of the black sailors.

Police took all the black sailors into “protective” custody. In what would become a pattern through the year, it was the victims who were charged with riot.

IN FEBRUARY nine Arab stokers signed on to a ship in South Shields, near Newcastle. They went to the NSFU union office to pay their dues.

However, NSFU union official James Gilroy told bosses there would be “bloodshed” if the men—members of his own union—were hired.

He got the ship to hire a new set of white workers.

A crowd of about 200 chased the Arabs into the area where they lived and about 50 local black people came to their aid.

The authorities called in the army to end the fighting.

In April, mobs attacked a cafe used by black and Arab sailors in Cable Street in London’s east end.

Four Arabs were hospitalised and another four given medical treatment in custody. Again no white person was charged.

The rioting in Liverpool was the most sustained of the year with crowds of up to 10,000.

A mob killed a young African-Caribbean man, Charles Wotten, while more than 700 black people were forced to leave their homes.

Wotten was either pushed or forced to jump from the dock where he drowned under a hail of stones from the rioters.

The *Liverpool Echo* newspaper claimed, “In every case the coloured men were the aggressors.”

Some had been attacked at home while in bed.

The Cardiff riots were the most brutal with three black “coalers” killed.

The ringleader of their murderers, Gordon Maskell, said, “I did it for the benefit of the seamen of which I am one, and cannot get a job because of these niggers being here.”

He was sentenced to three months hard labour.

The government introduced a scheme of voluntary repatriation. But a large majority of

sailors who were given a choice decided to stay.

A repatriation ship with 800 berths left Cardiff with just 63 Indians and 50 Adenese on board.

The Jamaican socialist and poet Claude McKay was outraged at racist scapegoating in the press.

Even the left leaning *Daily Herald* newspaper published a racist front page that read, “Black Scourge in Europe—Sexual Horror Let Loose by France on the Rhine.”

Savages

The article outrageously condemned France for using black African colonial troops, “thrusting her black savages into the heart of Germany”.

McKay wrote a letter complaining that the “result of your propaganda will be further strife and blood-spilling between whites and the many members of my race who have been dumped down on the English docks since the ending of the European war”.

The *Herald* refused to publish it. It was only Sylvia Pankhurst’s revolutionary socialist paper *Workers’ Dreadnought* that gave him space to counter the lies in the mainstream press.

The racist attacks were often associated with sexual paranoia.

Some of the cafes attacked in London were Arab run and employed white women who were accused of “consorting” with the customers.

In Cardiff the trigger for a riot was a mixed group of black men and white women returning from a day out in a carriage.

In Newport a chip shop jointly owned by a white woman and her African Caribbean husband was wrecked.

The very fact that such relationships existed shows another side to immigrant life that is not in the newspaper reports.

These tended to assume that any woman who would get involved with a non-white man was of low moral character.

Each of these stories suggests that, for some people, life was less racist.

It was the Communist Party (CP) that took a lead in challenging the racism of much of the trade union leadership from its founding in 1920.

The CP was key to setting up the National Minority Movement in 1924. This



Black seafarers during the First World War (top) 1919 saw mass strikes (above)

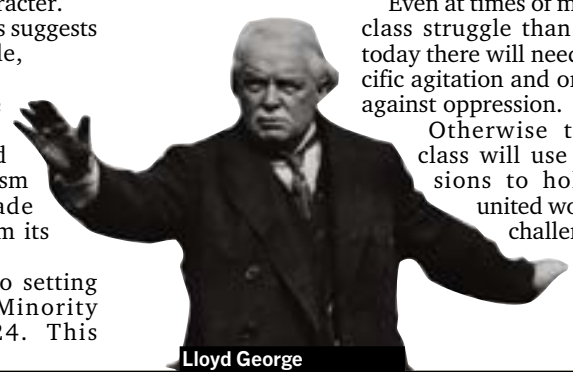
organised the left wing minority that opposed the conservatism of the union leaderships.

Class resistance has the potential to combat racism, sexism and all forms of oppression.

Yet the fact of race riots at a time of high class struggle underlines that this is not automatic.

Even at times of much higher class struggle than in Britain today there will need to be specific agitation and organisation against oppression.

Otherwise the ruling class will use such divisions to hold back a united working class challenge.



Lloyd George

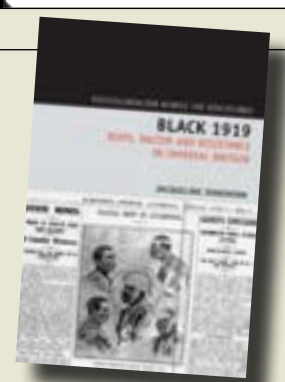
READ MORE

● **Black 1919—Riots, Racism and Resistance in Imperial Britain** by Jacqueline Jenkinson £23.70

● **Muslim working class struggles** by Hassan Mahamdallie This International Socialism journal article delves deeply into the

struggles of lascars living in Britain
bit.ly/Muslimworkingclass

Available at Bookmarks, the socialist bookshop. Phone 020 7637 1848 or go to bookmarksbookshop.co.uk



COMMENT

Treat drug use as a health issue, not a criminal one

Sadie Robinson looks at a new programme to give heroin users diamorphine which aims to help people escape addiction



STREET HEROIN users are more likely to contract diseases

A SMALL number of heroin users in Middlesbrough will be given free doses of the drug under a new scheme.

Fifteen users in the Teesside town will receive diamorphine—medical grade heroin—twice a day. The plan aims to cut crime, keep addicts safer and help them escape the drug.

It isn’t a new idea. Some 280 people in Britain were prescribed diamorphine in 2017-18. It was the main form of treatment for addicts in Britain until 1967.

For some, taking drugs to overcome addiction may sound nonsensical. Yet when diamorphine was standard practice, the number of known heroin users rarely rose above 1,000. When governments embraced a “war on drugs” instead, heroin use exploded.

Phasing out prescriptions left the supply of heroin to organised crime. It fed an epidemic as users tried to get others addicted so they could sell drugs to fund their own habit.

In 2017/18 141,189 heroin addicts were engaged with health services in England and Wales.

Heroin destroys lives. But criminalising addicts is more likely to trap them in addiction. Being tainted as a criminal leaves people more isolated.

Crimes

Many end up committing other crimes to get money for drugs—and are jailed as a result. After prison, it’s harder to get a job and a home.

Many addicts end up homeless or driven into prostitution. The Pew Charitable Trusts said last year that nearly 300,000 people were in jail across the US for drug violations.

This compares to less than 25,000 in 1980. Prisoners

are also serving longer terms than in previous years.

Pew found “no statistically significant relationship between state drug imprisonment rates and reported drug use, drug overdose deaths and drug arrests”.

Diamorphine is prescribed medically all over the world—so the drug itself isn’t completely unsafe. Criminalising drugs is dangerous. People who take street heroin are more likely to face contaminated drugs or dirty needles, and contract diseases such as HIV or hepatitis C.

And drug laws give the cops another reason to target black people with stop and searches.

So criminalising drugs doesn’t cut drug use or keep people safer. Treatments involving monitored doses is more effective at doing both.

Drug abuse is a health issue, not a crime. People should be given support to recover.

And we also need to tackle the reasons for drug abuse. People take drugs for

different reasons. But often they are looking for a release from the stress, depression or boredom in their lives.

And heroin use has soared in areas where working class lives and jobs have been destroyed, such as former mining areas.

Drug abuse reflects what’s wrong with the society we live in. Those at the top who claim to care about it are hypocrites.

There was a 16 percent rise in drug-related deaths in 2018. People don’t get the support they need because governments deem it too costly.

Regulation

Under Home Office regulation diamorphine must be provided in freeze-dried ampoules that cost £9 or £10 for 100g.

This means prescribing it costs £14,000 a year per patient. Meanwhile drug services are cut.

Drugs that do immense harm, such as alcohol and tobacco, are legal—and enormously profitable.

And the rich and their lackeys in government are free to take drugs as long as they look suitably apologetic afterwards.

The answer isn’t drugs for all. It’s to get a system where people don’t need drugs in order to get through the day or to bring a bit of excitement into their lives.

Scapegoating drug users distracts from the real problem—a capitalist system that fails the vast majority of people.



Those at the top who claim to care about drug abuse are hypocrites

Hillsborough manslaughter trial begins

by SADIE ROBINSON

DAVID Duckenfield has become “the focus of blame” for the 1989 Hillsborough football disaster, a court has heard.

Benjamin Myers QC opened the defence for Duckenfield at Preston Crown Court on Monday. He said the case against Duckenfield, whose retrial began last week, is “unfair” because many other factors played a role in the disaster.

Myers said these included poor stadium design, bad planning and crowd behaviour.

Some 96 Liverpool football fans died as a result of the disaster, after a crush built up in two pens at Sheffield Wednesday’s Hillsborough stadium.

Duckenfield was match commander for South Yorkshire Police on the day of the disaster. He denies 95 counts of manslaughter.

Duckenfield can’t be tried over the death of the 96th victim, Tony Bland, as he died more than a year and a day after his injuries were sustained.



DAVID DUCKENFIELD in 1989

Myers told the court, “Whilst heartfelt sympathy for those who suffered is natural, it must never be a reason to convict someone for events beyond

his control or responsibility.”

Last week the court heard that Duckenfield lied about fans forcing open a gate after he ordered it to be opened.

Richard Matthews said

Duckenfield told Football Association officials that fans had forced Gate C open.

He said, “Mr Duckenfield has subsequently admitted that it was a lie.”

Some 24,000 Liverpool fans were directed to the Leppings Lane end of the ground on the day of the disaster. Limited turnstiles meant a bottleneck of fans built up

outside the ground, and Duckenfield agreed to open a gate to relieve crushing.

Fans entering the ground saw a tunnel marked “standing” that led to pens 3 and 4, where the fatal crushing occurred. Matthews said fans were “naturally drawn” down the tunnel.

Consequences

He said Duckenfield gave “no thought to the inevitable consequences” nor did he “make any attempt to monitor what was occurring, let alone avert the tragedy”.

Matthews said that Duckenfield has also agreed that he made a number of failings and that some were “grave and serious”.

Matthews told the jury that the “extraordinarily bad” failings of Duckenfield “contributed substantially” to the deaths of the 96 fans. He said Duckenfield had “ultimate responsibility” for the police operation to secure fans’ safety.

The court heard that a jury in a previous trial in January had been unable to return any verdict on Duckenfield.

The retrial continues.

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Anti-union laws end anti-racist post strike

Postal workers struck in defence of a Muslim colleague, but the bosses got an injunction against them

AN UNOFFICIAL strike over alleged racism and victimisation has ended after Royal Mail bosses used strikebreakers and a court injunction.

It's a disgrace that a company that claims to care about equality acted in this way. The union leaders should have escalated and broadened the strike, not backed off.

The action started when 50 workers in the CWU union at Merseyside's Bootle and Seaforth delivery office struck two weeks ago.

It was in response to an alleged racist comment made by a manager to a Muslim worker.

Two days later hundreds of workers at the Warrington mail centre, the North West hub and another office walked out in solidarity.

The strike spread to Warrington after drivers from the mail centre were suspended for refusing to cross the picket line at Bootle.

Workers at the Warrington offices returned after the drivers were fully reinstated and given back pay.

They will not be asked to cross picket lines in the future.

But the strike continued at Bootle this week.

Escalation

In a massive and near-unprecedented escalation, bosses sent in strikebreakers on Tuesday. They have been variously reported as agency workers and managers.

Cops were on hand to usher in the scabs.

On Tuesday the North West region of the CWU said, "Visited the Bootle picket line this morning. It appears that some Royal Mail managers are making spurious allegations against the picket and using the police as if it was their own private security firm."

"This is their seventh day on strike. If one of our members had been accused of making racial comments they would have been suspended on the spot. But the same rule does not apply to managers."

But on Wednesday, following

an injunction served by the courts to the CWU the previous night, the Bootle strike was called off and strikers returned to work on Wednesday morning.

The issue which brought them out on strike has not been resolved.

Speaking to Socialist Worker last week, one CWU member in the Bootle office said, "We stand up for one another, that's the rule here."

"We are not going to let managers use any sort of attacks to weaken us."

"There are people from different backgrounds here but we are all workers and trade union members and we know to stick together or we're lost."

"I don't want to go back to working with a manager who stands accused of racism. Racism is something for trade unions to take up and oppose."

The unofficial action came as CWU members across Britain vote on whether to strike over Royal Mail plans to attack their conditions and slash jobs.

The ballot closes next Tuesday. All the signs are that a hugely energetic campaign will deliver a very big vote for strikes—well over the Tories' 50 percent turnout threshold.

It must then be turned into effective action as soon as possible.

The Bootle post strikers have given a lesson on how to bring anti-racism into the workplace. And they have shown how anti-racism is crucial to working class unity.

But the use of scabs and injunctions is a big challenge to the union. There should have been mass pickets at Bootle, and solidarity walkouts.

The use of strike breakers cannot be allowed to become routine. If it does they may be used at key moments in any local or national dispute. There were attempts to do this in the 2009 London strike. This was met with protests.

It was wrong to back off in Bootle.



ON THE picket line in Bootle P

PICTURE: CWU NORTH WEST REGION

Northern Ireland abortion law changes are a victory—but the struggle goes on

ABORTION WILL be decriminalised in Northern Ireland on 21 October—if a devolved Northern Irish government does not meet before then.

It will mark an historic turn for the pro-choice campaign there.

The change will repeal two sections of the 1861 Offences Against the Person Act.

This law still governs abortion law in England and Wales, with the 1967 Abortion Act only permitting abortions in certain limited circumstances.

Repealing the 1861 Act offers new opportunities for activists elsewhere to fight for more progressive legislation that enshrines in law a woman's right to choose.

Some 1,053 women travelled from Northern Ireland to England and Wales to have abortions last year.

Those who travel to access services face harsh punishment upon their return.

Addressing a pro-choice rally in September, civil rights campaigner Bernadette McAliskey said, "We are not asking people with deeply held convictions to make choices against their conscience. We are asking for the right to make choices ourselves."

"And not to have the theology, ideology, or

culture of dominance imposed on our thinking and our choices."

Under new rules, women who currently face punishment will have all charges dropped.

The changes come 52 years after abortion was decriminalised in the rest of Britain. The government in Westminster had previously claimed that abortion rights were a devolved issue.

Majorities

In order for legislation to pass in Northern Ireland, both unionist and nationalist majorities are required.

This means anti-abortion bigots such as the Democratic Unionist Party, backed by their friends in Westminster, can block a vote on abortion rights. They have used this veto 80 times.

But the government there collapsed in 2017, and no replacement has been formed.

Campaigns such as Repeal the 8th in Ireland—which successfully overturned an amendment criminalising abortion last year—have put enormous pressure on Northern Ireland to follow suit.

At the beginning of the month, the court of human rights in Belfast ruled that denying abortion is contrary to human rights laws.

This was after Sarah Ewart travelled to England to obtain an abortion upon finding out that the foetus had an abnormality that meant it could not survive outside her womb.

The court finding and the upcoming changes are a massive victory. But there is currently no framework in place to give women legal access to abortion.

Northern Ireland is expected to put these in place by March 2020.

Church leaders and even some medical professionals have demanded that a government be formed to halt the amended act.

And new guidelines say that midwives with a moral objection to abortion can refuse to provide information on services.

There is still a fight to be had to ensure that women have safe and legal access to abortion, wherever it is needed. Socialists must support a woman's right to choose.

Gabby Thorpe



Fighting for choice

On other pages...
Post workers back strike in ballot
>>Page 20

IN BRIEF

Three strikes to give workers a voice

THREE GROUPS of workers in the United Voices of the World union have announced strike plans

- At St Mary's hospital in west London up 200 cleaners, porters and caterers outsourced to Sodexo are set to strike on 28, 29 and 31 October.
- Caterers at the University of Greenwich plan their first strikes on 24, 28 and 31 October.
- Royal Parks cleaners are set to strike on 24 and 31 October.

At issue in all of these are pay, working conditions and union rights.

Thompsons solicitors have a case to answer

GMB UNION members were set to stage a picket line and hold a demonstration at the TUC's Congress House this week. It is part of a pay dispute with Thompsons solicitors.

A strike at Thompsons' offices is planned for Friday, including at its site at the TUC.

●The picket line at the TUC starts at 7am and the demonstration will take place at 10:30am on Friday 18 October

Will Wilko workers accept the new offer?

STRIKES BY GMB union members at Wilko distribution centres were suspended last week after an improved offer from bosses.

Around 1,800 workers at Wilko sites in Magor, south Wales and Workop, Nottinghamshire were due to walkout over forced weekend working. GMB members have been voting on a new offer.

Pay offer is short measure say brewers

AB INBEV brewery workers in Magor, south Wales, struck last week over pay. They are Unite union members.

Hydroelectric ballot may flow to action

UNITE UNION members could unleash a torrent of resistance at Dinorwig and Ffestiniog hydroelectric power stations in North Wales.

Workers at the First Hydro company's stations voted nine to one in favour of balloting for strikes over pay.

Action gets a result for Hackney drivers

DRIVERS AND passenger escorts on school buses for disabled children in Hackney, east London, have accepted a financial settlement.

They had begun a 48-hour strike over split shifts on the day. Unite regional officer Onay Kasab said, "Hackney council made an offer which we took to the picket line. Members agreed to accept it."

STEEL



STEEL WORKERS and their supporters marched in Newport, south Wales, last Saturday against the closure of the Tata steel Orb plant

PICTURE: UNITE WALES ON FACEBOOK

HEALTH WORKERS

Health service battles for equal pay justice

by TOMÁŠ TENGY-EVANS

TWO GROUPS of health workers in the north west of England are escalating their fight for equal pay.

Hundreds of Unison union members at Blackpool Victoria Hospital and St Helens and Knowsley Hospital struck on Monday.

It was the first of six planned strikes by cleaners and support workers employed by subcontractor Compass. They are demanding the same rates of pay as workers who are employed directly by the NHS.

Workers were set to strike again on Wednesday and Friday this week and Sunday, Tuesday and Thursday next week.

The strikes come as Compass bosses' tried to silence workers under the company's social media policy.

Pat Woolham, a Unison regional organiser, said "Compass has targeted dedicated hospital workers who spoke out about the injustice that has driven them to strike. It's time for Compass to pay



Picketing in Blackpool

PICTURE: UNISON NORTH WEST

the NHS rate for NHS jobs or leave our health service."

A Compass worker received a standing ovation at the Unison North West regional council meeting last weekend.

Meanwhile Unison members at Addaction struck for three days from last Wednesday.

The workers were outsourced from the NHS to charity Addaction, which runs the service on a contract to Wigan council. They are

demanding the same pay rise that workers on NHS pay scales received last year.

Kathryn Herbert, a Unison rep at Addaction, said, "We have been overwhelmed by the support we have received from the community, including from local people who use Addaction's services.

Every trade unionist should build support for these strikes.

●Tweet support to @NorthWestUnison

TAYSIDE

SCOTTISH pharmacy workers on indefinite strike over pay are staying on the picket line until bosses' fulfil their promises.

The Unite union members at NHS Tayside have been promised job evaluation panel hearings on Thursday of next week. The Scottish Terms and Conditions Committee (Stac), a joint bosses and unions' body, would then carry out "consistency checking".

The workers are fighting a "flawed job evaluation".

EQUAL PAY

Lincolnshire action spreads

HEALTH VISITORS in Lincolnshire are escalating their fight for equal pay and terms and conditions.

The Unite union has announced a ballot for strikes that could see more health visitors join their colleagues who have struck for 32 days since July.

A group of around 50 was transferred from the NHS to the local authority in October 2017. But they have

not received a pay rise since then—despite deals in the NHS and local government.

The new ballot involves health visitors who have been employed by the local authority throughout.

Unite says the council wants to introduce a "two tier" workforce, with different contracts for grade 9 and 10 health visitors.

The ballot ends on Friday of next week.

RAIL

Noise protest is a success

WORKERS ON the London Underground are celebrating after a threat of industrial action won a victory.

Members of the RMT union were due to start an indefinite programme of reduced speeds on the Jubilee, Central, Victoria and Northern lines from Thursday last week.

Workers are fighting excessive noise on the lines, but they suspended the action when bosses caved in.

Transport for London has promised a raft of new measures to cut noise.

■OUTSOURCING company Mitie has agreed to pay the Living Wage to workers on its Network Rail contract

after a major national campaign by the RMT union. The real Living Wage is £9 an hour across most of Britain, £10.55 an hour in London.

RMT general secretary Mick Cash said, "We will now press the company for full recognition and to address our wider agenda on working conditions."

■WORKERS IN the RMT union held a day of action last Friday against London Overground ticket office closures. The cuts will mean many ticket office hours will be slashed by 65 percent with many open only 7.30am-10am, Monday to Friday.

COURIERS



Picketing in Whitechapel, east London

PICTURE: IWGB COURIERS

Courier strike delivered

ECOURIER WORKERS who are members of the Independent Workers' Union of Great Britain (IWGB), struck for two days from last Thursday.

The company, a Royal Mail subsidiary, classifies its couriers as independent contractors.

This means that they do not receive a guaranteed minimum wage, holiday or sick pay.

They are also expected to pay a £6 weekly charge for use of their scanning devices, on

top of the cost of running their vehicles.

The IWGB members are demanding that eCourier workers be recognised as employees with paid holiday and rest breaks.

They also want the real living wage of £10.55 an hour after costs and that the company enters into a collective bargaining agreement.

●Donate to the strike fund at bit.ly/eCourierStrike

OBITUARY

Alan Hunt 1927-2019

MEMBERS OF Chesterfield Socialist Workers Party were very sad to learn of the death of Alan Hunt aged 89. He has been a member of the branch for many years.

Alan spent his national service in the RAF and was stationed in the Middle East, first in Iraq and then in Palestine in 1948.

This experience had a great impact on his political views. He became a lifelong supporter of rights for the Palestinian people and opponent of imperialism.

Alan regularly attended pickets and protests, bringing along his beloved dog Jet. He continued to be active despite failing health. Every year he



Alan Hunt

attended our fundraising dinner for a children's charity in Gaza.

Here he met Syrian refugee families who he befriended. We will miss him and remember him at this year's dinner in two weeks' time.

We send our condolences to his daughter Shirley and all her family.

James Eaden

EDUCATION

Sixth form colleges to walk out over pay

by SADIE ROBINSON

NEU UNION members in 23 sixth form colleges were set to strike on Thursday in a battle over pay and funding.

The action is the first of three planned walkouts. It follows years of funding cuts that have led to courses being cut, class sizes growing and increasing workload.

Some colleges have been forced to close or merge as a result of the cuts.

Sixth form colleges are the hardest hit of all 16-19 education provision. Some 22 percent has been cut in real terms since 2010.

Group

And workers' pay has fallen by 16 percent.

Colleges that will be striking include City and Islington, Brighton, Hove and Sussex, Hereford, Long Road, Newham and Shrewsbury Colleges Group.

Pippa Dowswell is an NEU rep at City and Islington Sixth Form College in north London. She said, "Funding cuts have had a massive impact on our college."

"We have been forced into a merger which has resulted in degradation of all our support services. There



STRIKING SIXTH form workers in south London in 2016

PICTURE: GUY SMALLMAN

has been a huge impact on workload as teachers try to plug the gaps.

"The decrease in pay has caused the college to lose staff members as they can no longer afford to live in London."

The union is demanding that funding for sixth form colleges per student should rise from £4,000 to at least £4,760. It wants sixth form college lecturers' pay to be

brought up to the level of school teachers.

In recent ballots, 84 percent of NEU members who voted supported strikes on an overall turnout of 43 percent.

The Tories' 50 percent turnout threshold requirement was reached in 25 colleges, but two are not part of this week's walkout due to half term. The union plans further strikes for 5 and 20

November. And it has begun reballots in 16 other sixth form colleges that didn't reach the turnout requirement in the initial ballot.

This means the strike on 20 November could be significantly bigger.

For a full list of striking colleges go to bit.ly/NEUstrike. A central London rally will take place on Thursday from 1pm at the Emmanuel Centre, London SW1P 3DW

LIBRARIES AND MUSEUMS

Strike to shelve cuts plan at libraries in West Yorks

LIBRARY AND museum workers in West Yorkshire were set to hold a 48-hour strike from Monday of next week.

The Unite union members at Bradford's 14 council-run libraries and museums are fighting against millions of pounds of cuts.

They have announced a further 72-hour walkout from 5 November, a four-day one from 18 November and five days from 2 December.

Meanwhile, library workers remain on indefinite strike in Bromley, south east London.

The Unite union members are fighting against subcontractor GLL's plans to slash 35 percent of frontline jobs.

Trade unionists should

raise money for the workers, who have been on strike for 19 weeks since 6 June.

Donate to the strike fund—account name Bromley Unite LE/531, account number 20272821, sort code 60-83-01

WORKERS AT Science Museum sites across Britain are set to strike for a second time on Thursday of next week.

The members of the Prospect union are fighting against low pay, after bosses gave them a pay rise of just 1.5 percent.

The workers previously struck at five sites owned by Science Museum Group—in London, Manchester, Bradford, York and Wiltshire—at the end of August.

HIGHER AND FURTHER EDUCATION



Pickets at Nottingham College

PICTURE: JEANNIE ROBINSON

Workers at Notts College back 14 days of walkouts

UCU UNION members at Nottingham College plan to hold 14 more days of strike next month in a battle over new contracts.

Union members have struck for 15 days this term against the contracts, which would slash pay and impose worse conditions. They ended a five-day strike last Friday. Last week workers unanimously backed a motion of no confidence in college boss John van de Laarschot and chair of governors Carole Thorogood.

The motion said their "continued mismanagement" had caused "extreme harm and distress to staff and students".

Union members say the college backtracked on a commitment to limit teaching hours to 24 a week while a new contract is negotiated.

Workers are set to strike on 5, 6, 7, 11, 12, 13, 14, 18, 20, 22, 25, 26, 28 and 29 November.

Send messages of support to Raileene.barker@nottinghamcollege.ac.uk

CLIMATE

'Build on climate strikes' say education workers

OVER 250 education workers, students and activists joined the Climate emergency—educating for the future conference in London last Saturday.

The event was organised by the NEU education union, with the backing of the UCU university union and NUS students union. It was an important step forward in ensuring the trade union movement is part of the fight for climate justice.

Workshops focussed on a range of issues. They included how education workers can organise for a climate emergency in their workplace, solidarity with climate refugees, and teaching the truth about

climate change. There were several contributions arguing that the solution to climate catastrophe has to look beyond individual solutions to tackling the capitalist system.

There was a sense of urgency at the conference. Suzanne Jeffery from Campaign Against Climate Change closed the conference calling on people to build on the success of the global climate strike on 20 September.

Following the conference, some delegates joined the tens of thousands-strong Extinction Rebellion demonstration in central London. **Emma Davis**

SOUTH LONDON

School strikers in south London celebrate victory

WORKERS AT Bexleyheath Academy were celebrating last week after strikes by NEU union members stopped compulsory redundancies.

Lynne Chamberlain from Greenwich & Bexley TUC told Socialist Worker, "After just four days of determined strikes, management completely withdrew the threat of compulsory redundancies."

"This means that 19 teaching assistant jobs were

saved. The strikes were supported by many local trade unions."

The academy is run by the Academies Enterprise Trust (AET).

The school was put into special measures following an inspection by the Ofsted schools inspectorate last November.

Ofsted said the school failed to deliver an "acceptable standard" of education.

NURSERIES

THE NEU union is fighting to defend nurseries from funding cuts.

Supplementary funding for maintained nursery schools (MNS) ends in August next year.

The union said the cut

puts all 392 MNS's at risk of closure. It is asking people to sign a petition to save the nurseries, and to encourage nursery head teachers to sign a letter opposing the cut.

For more information go to bit.ly/nurseries-campaign

UNIVERSITIES

Activists build yes vote in fight for pay and pensions

UCU UNION ballots for strikes over pay, pensions and conditions are continuing. They involve around 125,000 workers in universities across Britain.

At 147 universities, workers are balloting for action over pay, workloads, casualisation and equality. At 69 of them, over 52,000 staff are also balloting for strikes to defend their USS pension scheme.

Activists are fighting to get the biggest yes votes on the biggest possible turnouts in the ballots, which end on

30 October. The union's higher education committee will meet to consider the results on 1 November.

Shadow education secretary Angela Rayner last week said she backed workers—but called for "both sides" to hold more talks to avoid strikes.

She she called on them to "negotiate for as long as it takes to agree a way forward".

Calling a series of hard-hitting strikes is the best way to force bosses to retreat from their attacks, and to defend education.



ROYAL MAIL workplaces across Britain—such as this delivery office in Bognor Regis—held gate meetings and posted their ballots together

STRIKE COMING FOR ROYAL MAIL

by NICK CLARK

WORKERS IN Royal Mail are gearing up for a major battle after posting a stunning vote in favour of national strikes.

Members of the CWU union in the Royal Mail group voted by 97 percent on a 76 percent turnout for strikes in a ballot result announced on Tuesday.

It means that 110,000 postal workers across Britain could strike in the run-up to Christmas.

It's a battle to defend their jobs—and the very future of the postal service.

Speaking after the result was announced CWU general secretary Dave Ward said, "A great thank you to our members and our reps up and down the country. We are going to win this dispute."

The outcome of the dispute will decide whether Royal Mail continues to exist as a public service—or is smashed up for profiting billionaires.

Chief executive Rico Back wants to split Royal Mail up into a new parcels company run for profit, and a letters

delivery service that will be run down.

That means taking vital work away from Royal Mail—causing at least 20,000 job losses. And the union fears Back's ambition to scrap Royal Mail's obligation to deliver letters six days a week will lead to many more.

Monitor

Those left will be made to work like robots. Bosses want to use technology such as their handheld delivery devices to monitor everything workers do and find ways to make them work harder.

Meanwhile workers in the parcels company will end up employed on much worse terms and conditions, similar to those in courier services such as DPD or Hermes.

They're paid per delivery—not by the hour—have to pay for their own vans, and often aren't entitled to holiday or sick pay.

In the face of this onslaught, union activists went all out to deliver a Yes vote. Mark Dolan, a CWU area rep in north London, told Socialist Worker, "It's



Activists held rallies to build support for the dispute

Workers and the union should be prepared to break the law

been a real engagement with the members, from headquarters to local level.

"I don't think there's ever been a level of engagement or meetings inside and outside the workplace like this before."

It's now essential that the union calls hard hitting action as soon as possible.

A mediation process—demanded by a previous agreement between Royal Mail and the CWU—was set

to end on Friday of this week.

Royal Mail could use a legal challenge to stop action if the CWU calls strikes before this is finished.

And Tory anti-union laws mean that a union has to give bosses two weeks' notice before any strike.

Bosses used the courts to stop national strikes during a previous dispute in 2017—and many union activists fear they could do it again.

If they do, workers and the union have to be prepared to defy the law—by walking out unofficially if necessary.

But in any case the union has to keep up the momentum that the campaign has gathered so far.

Activists say it's unlikely that there will be any official action before mid-November.

A national demonstration before then would be a good way to build public support and solidarity.

Mark said, "We

should call action as soon as possible."

He added that there will also be a debate about the type of action the union should call.

Some activists say that "rolling action"—where the different sections come out on different days—can cause the most disruption for the least cost to workers.

Others say a united national strike is the best way to keep up the unity of the campaign.

"My view would be that any action we take should be everyone together," said Mark.

"We need to give them a succession of dates as well. 48 hours should be a minimum—maybe 72 hours after that."

"We need to go in hard. And it needs to be everyone."



Pets fighting a ruff deal